/659 cont./

606 In spite of these prohibitions, and precisely because of the prevailing obligations, the two parties must associate in an indirect and roundabout way. For about a year after her marriage, the daughter-in-law may exchange a few necessary words with her mother-in-law; the son-in-law for the rest of his life refrains from any direct conversation with his father-in-law. We have just spoken of this. It is the daughter who intercedes for her husband with her father, or the son who does so with his parents for his wife. The corresponding brothers-in-law or sisters-in-law also serve as mediators.

In a concrete situation, social intercourse runs as follows. /660/ When the son-in-law becomes aware that his father-in-law is approaching him and his family, he sends his wife out to meet him and has her say: "My husband sends me, he invites you into our hut!" Pleased over this, her own father replies: "Thank you very much, but I was about to build my own hut!" He decides to do this in order not to embarrass his son-in-law, for the latter would have to remain silent, sit apart at meals, and humble himself constantly, which would spoil the visit for him. Hence, in order to save him any embarrassment and unpleasantness, the father-in-law builds his own hut nearby, and he is assisted by his daughter. When the building is nearly finished, she returns to her own hut and addresses her husband in a voice that all can hear: "I invited your father-in-law to stay with us, but he prefers to live in a hut of his own. He thanks you!" Then her husband speaks in a loud voice so that the father-in-law can hear it: "I am very sorry that my father-in-law is not coming to my hut!" In this delicate way he expresses the fact that he is glad to be at the disposal of his father-in-law. While the latter is in the vicinity, his own daughter visits him repeatedly; the son-in-law himself appears in the father-in-law's hut only once or twice and inquires about the possible needs of his father-in-law from his own wife.

As a substitute for direct conversation, which is not permitted, they manage in their own way. As soon as it is quiet outside, the son-in-law, in a loud voice and without addressing anyone, tells what he has recently experienced, observed, and learned, especially things which are worth knowing for his parents-in-law. The latter hear each word and are kept up-to-date.

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/1019 cont./
517 476 friendly neighbors, but is willingly offered to every fellow-tribesman.

484 487 Each of the many individual families is constantly traveling about, not only under the pressure of the daily food quest, but also from a natural wanderlust (p. 363). They move slowly, but nevertheless cover long distances in the course of time. Definite boundaries separate the many local groups (p. 630) and the five dialect groups (p. 199 /untranslated/) from one another. These boundaries may be crossed under certain circumstances, and no visitor from another region can be lawfully prevented from doing so by the local residents. In general every family stays within its narrower home area, if only because they do not like to meet strange groups. [609] It is a universal characteristic of the Yamana to stay away from strangers in the first place or at least to avoid them; they feel constrained in the presence of strangers, and suspicion makes them almost ill (430).

> 430 Bridges (a):210 gives a reason for this which is not quite correct: "These people dare not go where they have no friends, and where they are unknown, as they would most likely be soon killed"/cited in English/. We have repeatedly mentioned that certain circumstances make it permissible for anyone to travel in the territory of another dialect group.

• 203 /1020/ The ceaseless travel of individual families who thus meet one another and whose travel routes intersect partly explains the remarkably good propagation of news, which works invisibly. Everything that happens and any event that is in any way noteworthy are circulated far and wide and with a speed that sometimes seemed inexplicable to me. This much is certain, the Yamana lack such means of communication as loud calls or drumbeats. I cannot reliably state whether or not they give each other digital signs within a visible range, but I infer this from careful observations. Every adult learns what has happened within the confines of a wide area and usually without much delay. Most news, of course, is communicated from mouth to mouth. The facts are inevitably altered

1: Gusinde--932 E-5 (1918-1924) 1937 SH6 Yahgan SH6

/1020 cont./

213 in various ways, and it sometimes happens that even the report of a death or a murder is false, which causes grave complications and unnecessary excitement (440). Since messages travel very

> 440. Stirling (VS:X, 196;1863) tells of an example. In the Wulaia region the rumor spread that Ukokko and his family, whose home was there, had been shipwrecked at Picton Island and murdered by the people living there. Without delay Ukokko's brother, along with a few friends, set out on an expedition for revenge and found himself in a very awkward situation when it became known that Ukokko had not been molested at all.

quickly in all directions, it is obvious that on certain occasions a large number of families flock together with amazing speed.

202 On special occasions this rather simple news service is supplemented by a few signal fires. BD:64 writes "ayina, Signal smoke or fires" /cited in English/. Earlier, Bridges (a):213 had already mentioned: "They signal to one another by fires, which they are very expert in making" /cited in English/. In reality it is less a fire than a thick cloud of smoke with which a signal is given. It is made in such a way that it cannot be confused with the ordinary smoke of the hut fire. First, rather thick pieces of dry wood are brought to a faint glow. Meanwhile the natives gather many branches of the evergreen beech (Nothofagus betuloides), which are the length of an arm and covered with dense foliage. A large bundle of these branches is then gathered together and pressed down on the glowing fire. Now no flame can arise, but a thick cloud of smoke immediately ascends. When it has reached a height of about five meters, the fire is quickly put out, and, as though cut off, the balloon-shaped cloud rises perpendicularly into the air. The thick mass of smoke remains intact for a long time, reaches a considerable height, and is recognizable for some distance as an actual signal. If /1021/ it did not have this balloon-shape but rose up in a long column or even as an irregularly shaped smudge,

/1022 cont./

521 instance, one told to the others in an evening, how he had seen, during the daytime a fanirook, a black bird, passing down a sloping hill, step by step: the bird looked round about, then at once it commenced to shake its feathers and flew off, about which they burst out into a loud laugh. Another began to tell what he had seen strange, when he was out on horseback, and the third what he had seen when be drove the cattle home" /cited in English/.

521 Meanwhile everyone rests comfortably, and anyone who feels
•203 like eating is immediately served by the mistress of the hut. None of those present knows when there will be another opportunity for a comfortable time together. On its trips each family usually spends only one or two nights in the same place. If entertaining fellow-tribesmen offer them company on an evening, they take advantage of it until long after midnight, and yet early the following morning they are ready to travel on. The ample, unconstrained exchange offers the incalculable advantage of keeping the individual members of the tribe from far and near in close touch and of laying bare everyone's actions. In this way all their /1023/, traditions are kept alive and transmitted, and any deviation from ancient custom can be prevented if it should become noticeable in any way.

522 Finally we must mention a custom that is practiced by the
[171] Yamana exactly as it is among the Selk'nam (Vol. I, 471), a diverting, half-serious, half-humorous talk contest between two people from different regions who have met in a hut. One of them will intentionally challenge his opponent with jokes and banter by praising the virtues of his own home and the capability of his own local group. Soon the other interrupts him with laudatory remarks about his region, his relatives and friends, the habits and qualifications of his group. The verbal exchange goes back and forth and is attentively listened to by all present. Finally when the two opponents have exhausted their repartee and their wittiness, they resort to mild insults and definite accusations. Now one tries to outdo the other in this without letting it become obvious that he feels hurt. At the dangerous moment, however, the bystanders, who unerringly recognize it, break off the talk contest between the two with very loud applause, thus preventing an unfortunate outcome of the initially